

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-03 AID-05 IGA-02 MC-02 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-07 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00

ACDA-07 SAM-01 H-02 PRS-01 /077 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8460

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS BELGIUM

USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BELGIUM

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

/CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 6134

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: MILI, PO

SUBJECT: GOP REQUEST FOR THREE C-130'S

REF: LISBON 5632 (DTG 181452Z AUG 76)

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT EANES HAS INDIRECTLY REQUESTED THAT
USG FURNISH THE THREE C-130'S TO MAP. I URGE THAT THIS
LONG-STANDING REQUEST BE INCLUDED IN THE 1977 SUPPLEMENTAL.
END SUMMARY

1. AT LUNCH TODAY, SEPTEMBER 8, DEFENSE MINISTER FIRMINO
MIGUEL TOLD ME HE HAD JUST SPOKEN TO PRESIDENT EANES WHO
HAS ASKED HIM TO CONVEY TO ME HIS PERSONAL REQUEST THAT
USG ASSIST PORTUGAL BY FURNISHING THREE C-130'S UNDER
MAP. FIRMINO MIGUEL WAS COGNIZANT OF THE STOPS AND
STARTS AND MISINFORMATION THAT HAD SURROUNDED THIS
ISSUE, AND SAID REQUEST BY PRESIDENT WAS AN EFFORT TO
FORMALIZE THE MATTER ONCE AND FOR ALL. I TOLD HIM
THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAD NOT YET TAKEN A POSITION
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AND EXPLAINED THE NATURE OF THE BUDGET PROCESS AND

THE PROBLEMS SURROUNDING CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION TO APPROPRIATION. I CONCLUDED BY SAYING I WOULD RELAY THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST TO WASHINGTON AND WOULD CONVEY TO HIM THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION.

2. COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, PORTUGUESE AIR FORCE LAST SPRING GOT WIND THROUGH ITS OWN PEOPLE IN BRUSSELS THAT USG WAS CONTEMPLATING GRANT AID OF THREE C-130'S. THEY TOOK THIS TO BE A CONSUMMATED FACT DESPITE OUR CONSTANT WARNINGS TO THE CONTRARY AND OUR EXPLANATIONS OF THE BUDGET PROCESS. PAF LEADERSHIP IS NOW ENCOUNTERING CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL FLAK FOR ITS CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH AMERICANS AND ITS FAILURE TO PRODUCE ANY COMMITMENTS FOR NEW EQUIPMENT. SURVEY TEAMS AND HIGH-LEVEL VISITS BOTH WAYS HAVE SIMPLY INCREASED EXPECTATIONS.

3. AIR FORCE LEADERS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE ARE INCLINED, UNFAIRLY, TO BLAME US. SOARES TOLD ME HE HAD BEEN PERSONALLY APPROACHED BY GENERAL SILVA CARDOSO WHO TOLD HIM AMERICANS HAD LOST INTEREST IN THE BRIGADE. I BRIEFED SOARES FULLY ON THE SITUATION, UNDERSCORING THAT NO COMMITMENT HAD EVER BEEN MADE. SOARES UNDERSTOOD AND SAID HE WOULD TRY TO STRAIGHTEN PAF OUT.

4. EANES'S POSITION: OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT AIR FORCE MADE AN EFFORT TO HAVE EANES BROACH THE SUBJECT WITH ME DURING OUR LAST CONVERSATION (REFTTEL) BUT APPARENTLY DID NOT GET TO HIM ON TIME. MIGUEL ASSURED ME EANES WOULD TAKE IT UP WITH ME WHEN I NEXT SAW HIM. HE ALSO ASSURED ME THAT EANES WAS TAKING STEPS TO COORDINATE ALL MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND TO PUT AN END TO INTER-SERVICE RIVALRY.

5. RECOMMENDATION: MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE STATUS OF THIS ISSUE DURING MY LAST CONSULTATION IN JUNE WAS THAT DEPARTMENT AND DEFENSE HAD AGREED AND THAT REQUEST WAS PENDING AT OMB. VISITING OMB OFFICIALS SHAW AND SCHLUETER INFORM ME OMB HAS AN OPEN MIND AND WAS STILL AWAITING DEPARTMENT'S REPLIES TO ITS JUNE 10 QUESTIONS
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AT TIME OF THEIR DEPARTURE FOR LISBON. THEY POINT OUT HOWEVER THAT CONSIDERABLE TIME HAS ELAPSED AND THAT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION THIS YEAR IS UNLIKELY EVEN IF PRESIDENT APPROVES REQUEST. DESPITE THIS I FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE INDICATE OUR DESIRE TO ASSIST PAF THROUGH THE PROVISION OF AN AIRCRAFT TYPE WHICH MAKES EXCELLENT SENSE IN TERMS OF THEIR MISSION AND CAN FURTHER ENHANCE THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE AIR FORCE AS WELL AS

CONTRIBUTE TO SUPPORT OF THE NATO-COMMITTED BRIGADE.
I STRONGLY URGE THAT EVERY EFFORT BE MADE WITH OMB TO
HAVE THE REQUEST MADE IN THE 1977 SUPPLEMENTAL.
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